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ABSTRACT

This publication reports the results of a survey in which the counselors were asked to rank various functions according to: (1) time actually allotted to the task over the year, and (2) ideal time allottments. The survey covered 40 elementary guidance projects funded by ESEA Title Three. The counselor's role was unique at each location. Results show that counselor's roles in the new programs were primarily devoted to consultation with teachers and resource persons, and individual counseling with students. The ranking of functions under an ideal situation closely followed the actual ranking. Types of personnel who previously handled duties now performed by the counselors are listed. Over a third of the counselors' activities had not been done before. Of those duties performed by others, most had been done by administrators. Strengths, weaknesses and recommendations of 27 districts are included. The qualities of the person selected as counselor was the major strength listed. The most-mentioned weakness was that the program objectives were too ambitious for the amount of time and number of people. The most frequent recommendation was that a regular information program be established for teachers and parents. A listing of the participating school districts appears. (Author)

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Division of Research
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December 1976

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ANALYSIS OF FORTY NEW ELEMENTARY GUIDANCE PROGRAMS IN PENNSYLVANIA

Summary

This publication reports the results of a survey in which the counselors were asked to rank various functions according to (1) time actually allotted to the task over the year and (2) ideal time allotments. The survey covered 40 elementary guidance projects funded by ESEA Title III.

The counselor's role was unique at each location since in some situations the counselor was able to participate in a planning period during which student needs were assessed; in others, the counselor's functions were fairly well defined before the counselor was employed.

The survey results showed that counselors' roles in the new programs were primarily devoted to (1) consultation with teachers and resource persons and (2) individual counseling with students. The ranking of functions under an ideal situation closely followed the actual ranking.

The survey also listed the types of personnel who previously handled duties now performed by the counselors. Over a third of the counselors' activities had not been done before. Of those duties performed by others, most had been done by administrators.

The following analyses includes the strengths, weaknesses and recommendations of 27 districts that completed their evaluation reports. The qualities of the person selected as counselor was the major strength listed. The most-mentioned weakness was that the program objectives were too ambitious for the amount of time and people allotted to the program. The most frequent recommendation was that a regular information program be established for teachers and parents.

A listing of the participating school districts appears in Appendix 5. Further information may be obtained from the project director:

Richard May, Guidance Consultant
Pennsylvania Department of Education
Box 911
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126
Phone: 717-787-6576

The complete reports from each individual school district will be available from:

Research and Information Services for Education (RISE)
198 Allendale Road
King of Prussia, Pennsylvania 19405
Phone: 215-265-6056

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ANALYSIS OF FORTY NEW ELEMENTARY GUIDANCE PROGRAMS IN PENNSYLVANIA

Background

The final appropriation of ESEA Title III funds through state agencies was made in 1975-76. Pennsylvania elected to use this final appropriation to establish elementary guidance programs in school districts that had no existing program. Forty new elementary programs were established, each with a budget of approximately $20,000. School districts were required to establish a committee to employ an elementary counselor and design a program. Funds were available for one year only and it was necessary that districts assume the funding after the first year.

The new elementary counselor's role in implementing a guidance program varied from location to location. Some districts had anticipated a counselor position and completed elaborate needs analyses to guide them in the establishment of the program. Where there was no prior planning, the counselor had to use a portion of the school year as a planning period. At others, functions were agreed upon and the various activities began to take place. In all cases, however, the districts were permitted to modify the program as the year progressed.

A consultant, either an elementary counselor educator or an experienced counselor, was assigned to help each district. In addition, a person from the Pennsylvania Department of Education was designated as liaison to the project and provided assistance. The Division of Research was requested to determine the roles assumed by the counselors as the new programs were launched.

The major focus of this study was to determine the kind of guidance role the counselors formed in the establishment of their new programs. The results were distributed to the counselors and other interested parties in April 1976. This report contains information as well as summaries of the strengths, weaknesses and recommendations that appeared in the final reports submitted by the school districts.

Procedure

The newly employed elementary counselors assembled in Harrisburg on October 16, 1975. As part of their orientation program, the project to define the counselors' roles was discussed. The counselors were asked to suggest categories for the various functions that they were, or expected to be, performing. After responses were analyzed, a form was drafted from the most common categories suggested and sent to each counselor for review and for any additional suggestions. The resulting form used to gather the data from the counselors appears in Appendix 1.

In completing the form the following spring, the counselors ranked their activities in the order of the time they spent in performing the various functions. In addition, they also ranked the same activities in the order that they would like to perform them in a hypothetical or ideal situation. This was done to determine whether the counselors' behavior matched their own guidance philosophy.

Another aspect of the role definition was to identify the kinds of guidance functions that had been performed by various staff members prior to the arrival of the elementary counselor hired through the Title III funding. Appendix 3 lists the activities previously performed by teachers, administrators and resource persons as well as those activities not previously performed. The information obtained from the form submitted by the counselors was compiled and analyzed for distribution to the counselors and other interested parties in April 1975.

The final report submitted by the school districts contained listings of the strengths and weaknesses of the new elementary guidance programs and recommendations. The 27 districts which had submitted their final report by November 1, 1976, are listed in the present report.

Results

Appendix 2 contains the elementary counselors' ranking of actual time spent on various counseling activities and the proposed ideal rankings. The responses of all the counselors were averaged and then ranked; the lowest numerical average received the rank of one. This indicates that more counselors rated the activity number one than any other activity. The ranking averages in the actual situation ranged from 2.6 for consultation to 6.2 for maintaining student records. This indicates that the most time was spent in consultation and the least amount of time in maintaining student records.

When a comparison of the ideal rank was made with the actual rank, there were minimal differences. The range of averages extended from 2.4 for individual counseling to 6.9 for maintaining student records. In the actual situation consultation was the most time-consuming activity and individual counseling second. But, in the ideal ranking these were reversed. The actual ranking also placed pupil assessment fifth and parent conference sixth; in the ideal these positions were reversed.

Since 2.4 (ideal) is closer to 1 than 2.6 (actual) there was more agreement among the counselors that individual counseling should be the most time-consuming activity in an ideal situation. Conversely the 6.9 (ideal) is closer to 7 than 6.2 (actual), indicating that there was closer agreement in the ideal situation that maintaining student records should be the least time-consuming activity. The largest gap in the averages occurred between the sixth and seventh actual ranking and between the third and fourth of the ideal ranking.

Appendix 3 contains a listing of those activities that were either not done or done by others in previous years. Since one district had two counselors assigned, 41 counselors responded to the survey. Therefore, each of the 22 activities has a distribution of 41 among these categories: teachers, administrators, resource persons and those not done; this produced a total of 902 responses.

Approximately one-third of the activities (361) performed by the elementary counselors had not been done before the program was initiated. This was especially true with respect to coordination. There were 257 instances where counselors performed activities previously conducted by administrative personnel. This was most evident in coordination (73), maintaining records of students (63) and consultation (63). Functions formerly performed by teachers and now by counselors included group guidance (50) and pupil assessment (47). The largest group of tasks formerly done by resource persons (54) was coordination.

Included under "administrators" are principals, vice principals, their secretaries or support staff. The resource category includes intermediate unit resources, high school or middle school counselors or psychologists and specialized personnel such as school nurses.

Strengths, Weaknesses and Recommendations of School Districts

The evalution reports on the 27 school districts were completed by outside evaluation teams who visited each project. Twenty-two districts rated the qualities

of the person selected as counselor as the major strength. Other strengths listed were communication with administrators and board members (16), support of teacher and quality of teacher in-service program (15) and communication with parents and the community (10). A complete listing of the strengths, weaknesses and recommendations, plus the frequency of the response, appears in Appendix 4.

There were fewer weaknesses listed. The major weakness was that the program objectives were too ambitious for the time and people allotted to the program (14). Other weaknesses that appeared 10 times each were teacher in-service programs that were not well developed and poor communication within the school and with the community.

The most frequent recommendations were that a district: establish a regular information program for teachers and parents (20), organize a steering committee which would include teachers and parents (15), obtain more funding and expand efforts (13) and include more public relations and interaction with the community (12).

A major theme of the comments was communication. There were many responses that communications were a strength of the program; others listed facets of communication as weaknesses. A large majority (20 of 27) recommended a regular information program with teachers and parents. Thus, telling others about the objectives of a new program helps to make the program successful.

Recommendations of the Role Definition Project

The role definition presents information that can be used in the following ways:

1. Used individually, differences between actual and ideal allotments of time can be helpful when the next year's activities are discussed.
2. The amount and kinds of activities not performed before and the indication of those formerly done by others can support the counselor's position in the district.
3. The first-year evaluation can be used as the starting point to chart the growth and change in the counselor's role as the program matures.
4. It can serve as a guide for education related to beginning new elementary counseling program.

APPENDIX 1

COUNSELOR ROLE DEFINITION

Please return this by March 15, 1976 to: Dr. Agnes Martinko
Department of Education
Box 911
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126

Actual Rank	Ideal Rank	Activity	Previously Done By
_____	_____	**Maintaining Records of Students**	
		school needs	_____
		project needs	_____
		writing reports	_____
_____	_____	**Pupil Assessment**	
		test administration	_____
		observation	_____
		interpretation	_____
		anecdotal record keeping	_____
_____	_____	**Consultation**	
		working with teachers individually	_____
		in-service and conferences	_____
		working with resource persons with respect to student needs	_____
_____	_____	**Coordination**	
		planning program	_____
		committee work	_____
		identifying outside agencies	_____
		community interaction	_____
		special programs	_____
		providing for learning disabilities	_____
		orientation	_____
_____	_____	**Group Guidance**	
		helping students with self-identity	_____
		conflict resolution	_____
		gaining positive feelings	_____
_____	_____	**Individual Counseling**	
		working on a one-to-one basis with students	_____
_____	_____	**Parent Conferences**	
		individual meetings with parents at school or at home visits	_____

APPENDIX 2

COUNSELORS' RANKING OF ACTUAL TIME SPENT ON VARIOUS COUNSELING ACTIVITIES AND PROPOSED IDEAL RANK

Activity	Actual		Ideal	
	Rank of Averages	Avg. of Counselors' Responses	Rank of Averages	Avg. of Counselors' Responses
Consultation	(1)	2.6	(2)	2.56
Individual Counseling	(2)	2.8	(1)	2.4
Group Guidance	(3)	3.2	(3)	2.6
Coordination	(4)	3.4	(4)	3.8
Pupil Assessment	(5)	4.1	(6)	5.5
Parent Conferences	(6)	4.8	(5)	4.0
Maintaining Student Records	(7)	6.2	(7)	6.9

APPENDIX 3

INDICATION OF PERSONS PREVIOUSLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTIVITIES NOW PERFORMED BY COUNSELORS

	Teachers	Administrators	Resource Persons	Not Done
Maintaining Records of Students				
1. School needs	6	29	1	5
2. Project needs	1	13	6	21
3. Writing reports	7	21	4	9
Subtotal	14	63	11	35
Pupil Assessment				
4. Test administration	17	9	11	4
5. Observation	9	7	7	18
6. Interpretation	8	14	8	11
7. Anecdotal record keeping	13	6	3	19
Subtotal	47	36	29	52
Consultation				
8. Working with teachers individually	-	22	2	17
9. In-service and conferences	-	23	3	15
10. Working with resource persons with respect to student needs	6	18	-7	10
Subtotal	6	63	12	42
Coordination				
11. Planning program	2	8	5	26
12. Committee work	6	6	2	27
13. Identifying outside agencies	1	15	13	12
14. Community interaction	2	14	9	16
15. Special programs	4	13	3	21
16. Providing for learning disabilities	4	7	16	14
17. Orientation	4	10	6	21
Subtotal	23	73	54	137
Group Guidance				
18. Helping students with self-identity	17	1	-	23
19. Conflict resolution	16	5	-	20
20. Gaining positive feelings	17	2	-	22
Subtotal	50	8	-	65
Individual Counseling				
21. Working on a one-to-one basis with students	8	1	7	25
Parent Conferences				
22. Individual meetings with parents at school	18	13	5	5
Grand Total	166	257	118	361

APPENDIX 4

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM 27 SCHOOL DISTRICTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE PROJECT

Responses	STRENGTHS
22	Qualities of person selected as elementary counselor
16	Communication with administrators and board members
15	Support of teachers and quality of teacher in-service program
10	Communication with parents and the community
9	Student awareness and enthusiasm about the program
8	Cooperative efforts in dealing with students
7	Observable improvement in student behavior and achievement
6	Attempt to provide a needed service
4	Facilities and materials
4	Organization
3	Career guidance component
2	Freedom for experimentation
2	Individual counseling
2	Testing data

	WEAKNESSES
14	Objectives were too ambitious for the time and people allotted
10	Teacher in-service programs not well developed
10	Communication within the school and with the community was poor
7	Objectives not clearly stated in measurable terms
6	Late implementation
4	Facilities inadequate
4	Parent participation inadequate
3	Group counseling efforts were weak
3	Lack of follow-up after individual counseling
3	Staff too dependent on counselor
3	No curricular review or attempt to integrate program with curriculum
2	Some teachers/classes wished to be excluded from the program
2	Parochial school not actively involved
2	Poor career component
2	Materials not well developed
1	Insufficient individual counseling opportunities
1	Peer group counseling on lower grade level not well integrated
1	Consultant not well utilized

	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT
20	Establish a regularly scheduled informational program for teachers and parents
15	Organize a steering committee which would include teachers and parents to assist elementary counselor
13	Secure more funding and expand efforts
12	Include more PR and interaction with community
9	Have ongoing evaluation and determine attitudes toward program
8	Establish long-range objectives in measurable terms
8	College better data and make records more accessible and useful
7	Improve and continue follow-up component
6	Provide adequate facilities within the school
4	Develop a sequential activity integrated with the curriculum
3	Restrict services to either certain grades or buildings to a manageable quota

APPENDIX 4
(continued)

Responses	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT (continued)
3	Increase the career education component
2	Continue to strengthen coordinated efforts
2	Focus on preventive aspect
2	Expand parochial contacts
2	Spend less time on coordination and more with students
2	Don't put elementary counselor in test administrator role
1	Have more group counseling activities

APPENDIX 5

SCHOOL DISTRICTS PARTICIPATING IN ESEA TITLE III GUIDANCE PROJECTS 1975-1976

Bermudian Springs School District
York Springs,
Pennsylvania 17372

Berwick Area School District
1100 Fowler Avenue
Berwick, Pennsylvania 18603

Blacklick Valley School District
55 Birch Street
Nanty Glo, Pennsylvania 15943

Brentwood Borough School District
3601 Brownsville Road
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15227

Brockway Area School District
96 North Street
Brockway, Pennsylvania 15824

Burgettstown Area School District
99 Main Street
Burgettstown, Pennsylvania 15021

Carlisle Area School District
623 W. Penn Street
Carlisle, Pennsylvania 17013

Central Cambria School District
R. D. #2, Rt. 422 West
Ebensburg, Pennsylvania 15931

Columbia Borough School District
901 Ironville Pike
Columbia, Pennsylvania 17512

Crestwood School District
281 S. Mountain Boulevard
Mountaintop, Pennsylvania 18707

Daniel Boone Area School District
Chestnut Street
Birdsboro, Pennsylvania 19508

Dover Area School District
E. Canal Street
Dover, Pennsylvania 17315

East Allegheny School District
1150 Jacks Run Road
Route 48
North Versailles, Pennsylvania 15137

Forest Hills School District
Box 158
Sidman, Pennsylvania 15955

Garnet Valley School District
Box 233
Concordville, Pennsylvania 19331

Greater Nanticoke Area School District
Box 126
Nanticoke, Pennsylvania 18634

Grove City Area School District
611 Highland Avenue
Grove City, Pennsylvania 16127

Indiana Area School District
501 E. Pike
Indiana, Pennsylvania 15701

Jersey Shore Area School District
201 S. Broad Street
Jersey Shore, Pennsylvania 17740

Juniata Valley School District
R. D. #1
Alexandria, Pennsylvania 16611

Mercer Area School District
Box 32
Mercer, Pennsylvania 16137

Mid Valley School District
Church Street
Olyphant, Pennsylvania 18447

Moniteau School District
R. D. #2
West Sunbury, Pennsylvania 16061

Mount Union Area School District
134 W. Market Street
Mt. Union, Pennsylvania 17066

North Star School District
1200 Morris Avenue
Boswell, Pennsylvania 15531

North Pocono School District
Church Street
Moscow, Pennsylvania 15904

APPENDIX 5
(continued)

Northwestern School District
1 Harthan Way, Box 68
Albion, Pennsylvania 16401

Northwestern Lehigh School District
R. D. #2
New Tripoli, Pennsylvania 18066

Palmerton Area School District
226 Delaware Avenue
Palmerton, Pennsylvania 18071

Reynolds School District
531 Reynolds Road
Greenville, Pennsylvania 16125

Richland School District
Central Office
Lamberd Avenue
Johnstown, Pennsylvania 15904

Ringgold School District
1200 Chess Street
Monongahela, Pennsylvania 15063

Rochester Area School District
540 Reno Street
Rochester, Pennsylvania 15074

Stroudsburg Area School District
123 Linden Street
Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania 18360

Susquehanna Community School District
R. D. #2, Box 5A
Susquehanna, Pennsylvania 18847

Turtle Creek Area School District
407 Howard Street
East Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15112

Upper Perkiomen School District
201 W. Fifth Street
East Greenville, Pennsylvania 18041

Warrior Run School District
R. D. #1
Turbotville, Pennsylvania 17772

Wattsburg Area School District
Box 219
Wattsburg, Pennsylvania 16442

Williams Valley School District
Route 209
Tower City, Pennsylvania 17980